



Volunteer  
Orientation  
Presentation



# OUR MISSION

- At EQUI-KIDS our goal is to provide, promote and support equine-assisted activities for individuals who have mental, physical, emotional, social or learning disabling conditions.
- Through our mission we strive to create impactful, positive, life-changing experiences for our participants, donors, volunteers and the community at large.



# OUR VISION

- EQUI-KIDS Therapeutic Riding Program is working to be recognized as one of the premier therapeutic riding program in the United States, upholding the highest standards of excellence to serve individuals with special needs through our mission to create impactful, positive, life-changing experiences for our participants, donors, volunteers and the community at large.



# UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

PATH Intl.

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International

<https://www.pathintl.org/>

Formerly:

NARHA

North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (1969-2011)

PATH Intl. (state/regional level)

TRAV

Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia

<https://travinc.org/>

EQUI-KIDS

# About PATH Intl.

- PATH Intl., a federally-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was formed in 1969 as NARHA to promote equine-assisted services (EAS) for individuals with special needs.
- With nearly 4,800 certified instructors and equine specialists and 873 member centers, nearly 8,000 PATH Intl. members around the globe help almost 69,000 children and adults--including more than 6,700 veterans and active-duty military personnel--with physical, cognitive and emotional challenges find strength and independence through the power of the horse each year.



# EQUI-KIDS HISTORY

- Founded in 1989 by Barbara S. Ford with one pony and six riders to help riders develop self-awareness, self-confidence and improve concentration, including physical benefits of muscle strengthening, stretching, and increased fine motor skills.



Barbara S. Ford-Founder W/Karen Holland 1991

# A PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

1989

EQUI-KIDS started at Charity Farm with one pony, Rusty, and six riders (Punga,VA)



PhotoScan by Google Photos

**Karen Holland (one of the first riders) & Rusty**

1993-1997

Moved to Holly Ridge Manor-owned by Sonny & Jackie Rountree (Seaboard Rd, Va. Beach)



**Holly Ridge Manor**

PhotoScan by Google Photos

1997-2009

Moved to Brookgreen Farm off of Oceana Blvd. (participants increased to ~60)



PhotoScan by Google Photos

1990-1991

Moved to Windy Willows Farm ('90); Rockland Stables ('91) owned by Rock Church (Indian River Rd. Va. Beach)



**Rockland Stables '91**

PhotoScan by Google Photos



# EQUI-KIDS FINAL HOME



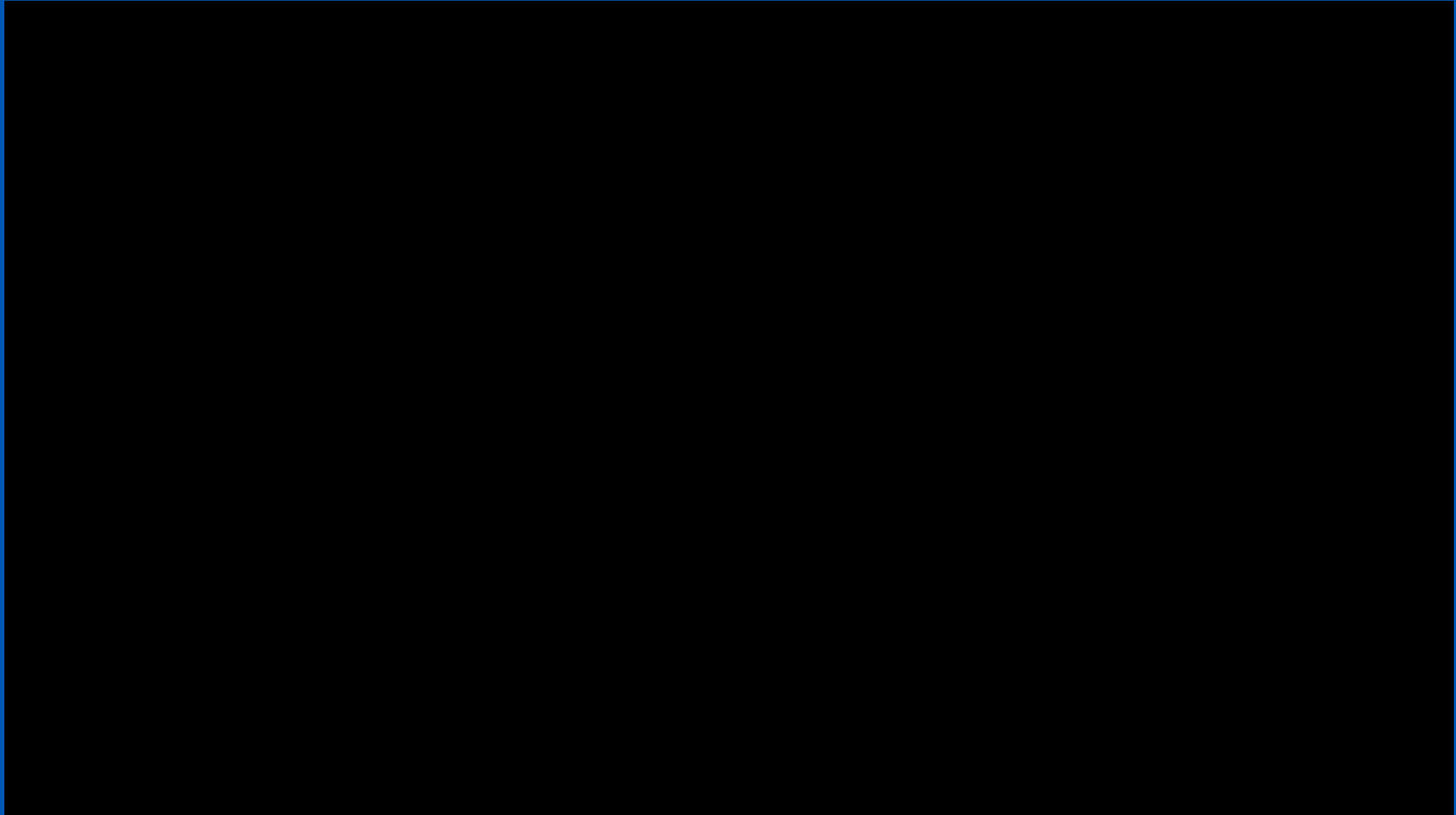
2010

Move to Heritage Park





EQUI-KIDS IS MORE THAN JUST A HORSE FARM...



# WHO WE SERVE

- Children and adults with special abilities
- Military Service Members (active-duty and veterans)
  - EQUI-VETS Military Service Program
- First Responders
  - EQUI-HEROES First Responder Program



# PRIMARY CENTER CONTACTS

Executive Director: Beth Yurkovac-Hornby

Development Director: Emily Peck

Site Supervisor: Austin Hamilton

Program Director: Kathy Chitwood

Program Manager: Haley Ward

Volunteer Coordinator: Renee Grimstead

Assistant Volunteer Coordinator: Liz Brewer

Barn Manager: Lisa Jankowski

Accounting Specialist: Eileen Garcia

Certified Riding Instructors: Beth H., Kathy C., Candyce B., Susan W., Eileen G., Haley W., Lisa J., Sara B.

# CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

EQUI-KIDS Therapeutic Riding Program policy is that any and all information pertaining to our participants, families, caregivers, staff and volunteers shall remain privileged and confidential. This information may include, but not be limited to any medical, social, referral, personal and/or financial information that may be disclosed as a result of participation in this program. Volunteers will be given information concerning participants on a “need to know” basis and in keeping with the confidential nature of our clients’ records. Disclosure of any confidential information shall not be released to anyone not associated with EQUI-KIDS.

# DRESS CODE

EQUI-KIDS is family-oriented and wants to present a professional appearance to everyone at the center.

- Closed-toed, heavy tennis shoes or boots (no Keds, Tom's, Sanuks, or flip flops)
- Pants or fingertip length shorts (if you wear leggings only your shirt must cover your hips).
- T-shirt or tank tops (3 fingers wide at straps- no cammies or spaghetti straps).
- For cool weather, wear or bring a jacket appropriate for the weather outside. If you get warm you can remove it, but the barn and arena are not heated. Bring gloves and a hat. If your hands are in your pockets, you are not able to assist your rider.
- For warm weather, bring a water bottle, wear sunscreen/bug spray, have a hat with a brim and/or sunglasses. Please remember that the hot weather is not an excuse to wear skimpy clothing that reveals too much. Your job requires bending and leaning over, please choose your wardrobe with that in mind.
- Limit your jewelry, it can become a distraction to our riders. Long necklaces, large earrings and large hair accessories can become a snag/grab hazard.
- Perfumes and lotions can be a distraction as well as attract bees and other biting insects so please don't wear them at the barn if possible.

# WHEN YOU MEET AN EQUI-KIDS PARTICIPANT

- First, remember that the person with a special ability is a person. They are like everyone else, except for the special limitations of his or her need/s.
- A special ability need not be ignored or denied between friends, but until your relationship is one of friendship, show interest in them as a person only.
- Be yourself when you meet a person with a special need.
- Help the person ONLY when they request it. When a person with a special needs falls, they may wish to get up by themselves, just as some people with visual impairments prefer to get along without assistance (clear emergency situations are the exception).
- Don't ask embarrassing questions. If the person wants to tell you about their special need, they will bring up the subject themselves. (When working with EQUI-VETS, DO NOT ask them about their special need /trauma, etc.)
- Don't separate the person with a special ability from his wheelchair or crutches unless they ask you to remove them. They may want them close by.
- ENJOY yourself and your friendship with the person. Their philosophy and good humor may give you inspiration.

# WHEN YOU MEET AN EQUI-KIDS HORSE

- Always SAFETY FIRST!
- Greet with the “cowboy handshake” (closed fist near the horse’s nose)
- Do not stand directly in front; (horses can’t see you and could bump you in the head); stand to the side of its head.
- Do not walk behind the horse (kicking hazard)!
- Do not open or close stall windows.
- Please do not feed them treats (each has a special diet).
- Please do not reach into stalls (it is the horse’s personal space-like your bedroom).
- Be calm and quietly approach them, whether in the barn or lessons.
- While in classes, please do not distract the horse from its job with clicking/kissing noises, petting, tapping, or scratching them.
- Be confident that the horse will do what the leader tells them to do, and as the sidewalker, your responsibility is only the rider.

# GENERAL RULES

- Volunteers must be at least 14 years old.
- No smoking, vaping, or drinking of alcoholic beverages will be allowed at the facility.
- No Dogs allowed!
- Do not feed the horses, each has their own special diet.
- Gates must remain closed at all times, if you open it, you are responsible for closing it.
- Lessons are held rain or shine. During inclement weather, it will be determined if lessons can be safely held in the indoor arena or if there will be a barn lesson.
- Please arrive for your volunteer shift at the time stated in our volunteer scheduling software, Volgistics.
- Please let us know of absences in ADVANCE by email at least 48 hours prior to your lesson time at [Volunteer@equikids.org](mailto:Volunteer@equikids.org) or call 757-721-7350, (if your absence is after 48 hours prior to your scheduled lesson time you must call or text and speak to someone to inform us of your absence).
- If a volunteer is a “no show” more than once (i.e. does not call for an absence) EQUI-KIDS reserves the right to reevaluate your volunteer service.



# GENERAL RULES, CONT'D

- Remember that participants with special abilities are just as active as everyone else. Close supervision is a must at all times while the participants are around the horses. All participants must wear helmets when working with or riding the horses. Although quite rare, falls from the horse occasionally do occur, if this happens, STOP! Remain as calm as possible. The horse leader is responsible for holding the horse while the sidewalkers are responsible for the rider. The instructor will take charge immediately and tell you what is to be done next. This will be discussed further during the Sidewalker training.
- Volunteers are never to dismount a rider unless under the direct supervision of the instructor.
- Do not lead or handle horses until you have been through Horse Leader Training and specifically asked to handle a horse.
- Volunteers are not to speak to the media about EQUI-KIDS. If you are asked to write an article or publish a photo you must have approval from the EQUI-KIDS Executive Director. Do not place any photos of participants or other volunteers on public social media sites such as FaceBook or Instagram. This is to ensure the privacy of our participants.
- EQUI-KIDS reserves the right to dismiss volunteers from their duties. In this regard, any person who violates any of the aforementioned incidents or any unnamed incident that negatively affects the program can be asked to leave.

# SAFETY INFORMATION

- First Aid Kits are available in the administration building in the cabinet in the family waiting area (marked by red placard) and in the Farrier Stall in the barn. We will review the sites on the site tour.
- AEDs are located in the copy room behind the front desk and outside the feed room in the barn.
- Fire Safety Regulations – we will discuss further in training and walk through a practice “Fire Drill”. We will review the R.A.C.E fire plan.
- Incident Loss Report requirements review.



# INCIDENT LOSS REPORT

EQUI-KIDS Therapeutic Riding Program policy is to report and document incidents that occur, regardless of whether the incident is large or small or a 'near miss,' promptly to the appropriate staff member. (Incidents include accidents, injuries, or adverse behaviors involving participants, parents, volunteers, guests, employees, or animal behaviors.) Staff will give the reports to the Program Manager. Please be very specific with details describing the incident so that we can follow up and implement changes as needed to mitigate future incidents

All participants, parents, volunteers, guests, and employees involved must complete an Incident/Loss Report as soon as possible after the incident/loss occurred. This report shall include, but not be limited to:

- NAME
- AGE
- ADDRESS
- TELEPHONE NUMBER
- DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT/LOSS
- DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT/LOSS
- EQUINE INVOLVED (if applicable)
- SIGNATURE OF PERSON INJURED (if applicable)
- WITNESS VERIFICATION

# INCIDENT LOSS REPORT CONTINUED

Follow up information may include:

- . Telephone calls to injured parties (parent/guardian/caretaker) by the Program Director or the Executive Director.
- . Telephone calls to the Insurance Company to determine if the incident requires incident/loss documentation/reporting.
- . Final disposition of the incident/loss.

# FIRE SAFETY REGULATIONS: R.A.C.E.

In the event of a fire emergency, your responsibility as a Volunteer is to R.A.C.E

**R - RESCUE** - This means only HUMAN BEINGS who are in the immediate danger of being injured by the fire as you are LEAVING for safety. \*\*Absolutely no attempt should ever be made to ENTER into a burning building to rescue anyone, anything or any ANIMAL! Volunteers and riders will assemble at the designated area (shown on tour) either at the Mountain Range or if in the outdoor ring, all will remain in the ring, the instructor will dismount riders and lineup. Do not go to the parking lot, this will enable a clear path for rescue vehicles. \*\*ONLY STAFF are authorized to attempt to rescue animals. Special procedures have been developed to ensure fire evacuations of the barn.

**A - ALARM** - YELL loudly and continuously “FIRE! – CALL 911” as you are exiting the building to safety. Continue to “sound the alarm” and alert everyone of the fire – activate all emergency response systems or make sure someone responsible has made the call to proper authorities. Familiarize yourself with the locations of all available telephones (administration and barn locations). Emergency #s are posted by each on site phone.

**C - CONTAIN** - If possible to safely smother the fire with water, sand, fire extinguishers, etc. BEFORE it becomes out of control, do so as you leave. NEVER continue to try to extinguish any fire that is rapidly developing – REMOVE yourself from the danger immediately! Remember – HAY and WOODEN structures can ignite in seconds! SAVE YOURSELF and others–the barns can be rebuilt YOU CANNOT BE REPLACED! Familiarize yourself with the locations of all fire extinguishers on the property (both ends of the barn by each door and at the back door in the office/barn). Fire escape routes are clearly marked in the barn, volunteer lounge, classroom, and in the office/administration areas. Review how to safely “operate” a fire extinguisher – point at base of fire, pull lock, aim and squeeze – gently move from side to side to cover base of fire. REMEMBER – STOP-DROP and ROLL in the event that anyone actually catches on fire (clothes, etc). Water hoses are also located at both ends of the barn and near each pasture.

**E - EVACUATE** - Again, as a volunteer this means only assisting in evacuating PEOPLE (not horses or other animals). Staff are responsible to implement animal fire evacuation only. Direct all people to meet at the designated area - **MOUNTAIN RANGE** -(pasture with small hills nearest Sandbridge Road). Team leaders or instructors will take the roll to ensure safety of all volunteers for that day. (This is the reason it is important to sign in each time you are on the property.) Evacuation routes are posted in the barn and in the administration office. Remember to evacuate from either end barn doors or any side door. Windows may be open in some stalls, if closed do not attempt to open them as they may be locked; find an exit route.



# EMERGENCY INFORMATION

*If there is an emergency while a lesson is in session:*

1. Halt all horses.
2. All horse leaders will position themselves beside the horse. The horse leaders are responsible ONLY for the horse, not the riders.
3. All sidewalkers will stabilize their riders (arm over leg support). The sidewalkers are responsible ONLY for the rider, not the horse.
4. The instructor will supervise the dismounting, either verbally or personally.

*Emergency dismount*

1. If you must remove a rider from the horse quickly (i.e., a seizure or a spooked horse), the sidewalker on the left is responsible for dismounting the rider. Both sidewalkers should immediately remove the rider's feet from the stirrups before dismounting.
2. The instructor will determine if medical personnel are required and will request assistance in contacting specific personnel.
3. If circumstances call for arena evacuation, the riders will be escorted out first by their volunteers (if used). Then, when riders are out of danger, the horses will be removed by their leaders to an appropriate place. We will gather at our evacuation meeting site at the **MOUNTAIN RANGE**.
4. The instructor will determine if medical personnel are required and will request assistance in contacting specific personnel.

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION CONTINUED

## *Spooked Horse*

Should a horse become frightened, sidewalkers should stay with their riders and apply the arm over thigh support hold. The horse leader will attempt to halt and calm the horse and try to stay with it. The sidewalkers should remain with their rider and maintain a supportive hold. Listen for and follow all directions from the instructor.

## *Loose Horse*

If a horse should become loose in the barn or the ring - **DO NOT** chase after the horse. If they feel you are a threat, they will run more. Keep calm. The horse will eventually stop. The instructor will give directions on who is to approach and catch the horse. If you are in a lesson with another team, as a sidewalker, calm your rider. If a horse becomes loose in the barn - do not chase - but warn others by announcing "**loose horse**". Get to a safe area out of the horse's path until the horse stops.

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION, CONT'D

## Universal Precautions

Use universal precautions to minimize contact with blood and body fluids by taking steps to prevent non-intact skin exposures of individuals to specific organisms such as Hepatitis B and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS). You assume bloodborne pathogen infection in all persons when using universal precautions.

1. Wear disposable latex or vinyl gloves when it is likely that hands will contact bodily fluids. Protect clothing with a waterproof material when it is likely that bodily fluids will soil them.
2. Wear masks and eye protection when it is likely that bodily fluids will splash eyes or mucous membranes.
3. Wash hands often before and after attending to person, paying particular attention to around and under fingernails and between the fingers, even if gloves are worn. If accidental contact with these body substances occurs, wash as soon as possible.
4. Use resuscitation masks for CPR (chest compressions only are in use during Covid-19).

**Covid-19 Protocols (see website)**



# EMERGENCY DRILL PRACTICE

The following guidelines will help you understand what will occur and your part during the drill. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with these drills (to be discussed and practiced during the first lesson of every session, **for riders, volunteers, staff, and families**).

## If you are in the barn:

- Leave what you are doing immediately.
- Proceed directly to the nearest exit.
- All volunteers/personnel will meet at the **Mountain Range**.
- If possible, and there is no risk, a team leader/instructor will take the roll. The team leader can start with the volunteers at the Mountain Range then proceed to the ring.
- EQUI-KIDS personnel will evaluate the situation regarding the safety of returning to the barn, along with the Emergency First Responders (if called).

# EMERGENCY DRILL PRACTICE CONTINUED

## If you are in an outdoor riding ring:

- The instructor will move all teams to the furthest corner of the ring.
- If the instructor deems it necessary, we will dismount all riders, and horse leaders will remain with the horses.
- The instructor will move riders and sidewalkers to a safe area away from the horses.
- Once the situation has been deemed safe, the instructor may resume with the lesson as deemed appropriate.
- If the situation warrants, the instructors will use their Emergency Contact list to notify the Executive Director and Program Director of the emergency.
- The Executive Director or Program Director will then implement emergency protocols documented in the EQUI-KIDS Risk Management Guidelines.

## If you are in the indoor arena:

- The instructor will dismount the riders in the arena as efficiently and safely as possible.
- Horse leaders will then exit with the horses through the far end of the arena through the large doors. Horse leaders will proceed to the large outdoor riding ring and stay with the horses until further notice.
- A sidewalker will be assigned to buddy up with a rider and escort them through the exit door on the far end of the arena (not the large doors). Everyone will proceed to the meeting evacuation site - the **Mountain Range**.

# OUR PROGRAMS

- Therapeutic Riding (mounted services)
- Therapeutic Horsemanship (ground-based services)
- Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL)
- Mental Health (Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy)
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- School Partnership Program (SPP)
- EQUI-VETS Military Service Program
- EQUI-HEROES First Responder Program
- Job Coaching (In conjunction with VBCPS)
- Inclusion Summer Camps
- Professional Workshops and Retreats



# PROGRAM IMPACTS

## PROUD TO SERVE



495 children and adults with special abilities



75 Veterans & Active Duty



20 First Responders

*Providing Equine-Assisted Services Since 1989*



12 Programs Offered



4,000 Hours of Lessons Provided



18 Beloved Horses



\$1.3 Million Dollar Operating Budget

## VOLUNTEERS



250 Active Volunteers



Value of Service Hours  
**\$203,980**



7,000 Service Hours



Average of 3 volunteers to serve 1 participant

## PARTICIPANT POPULATION

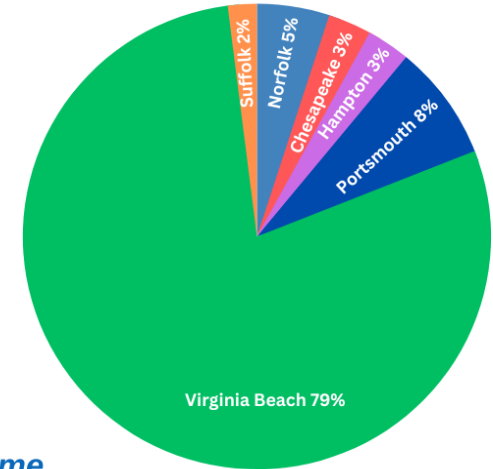
### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- 32% Emotional Disorders
- 17% Autism
- 15% Developmental Disabilities
- 7% Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- 7% Neurological Disorders
- 6% Down Syndrome
- 3% Cerebral Palsy
- 2% Visual/Hearing
- 11% Other

### AGE

Youth 5-12	36%
Youth 13-17	37%
Adults 18-39	19%
Adults 40-64	7%
Adults 65+	1%

### AREAS SERVED



*Changing Lives, One Stride At A Time*



# OUR FACILITY

Administration  
Building

24-Stall Barn

92-acres with  
wooded trails



C. Boykin 6.20.19

# EQUI-KIDS SITE MAP



EQUI-KIDS'  
Wooded  
Property with  
Trails

Pastures 2-4

Small  
Paddock

Pasture 1

Maintenance  
barn

Sandbridge Road

Dressage Arena

Outdoor Arena

Emergency  
Evacuation  
Meeting Site

Barn

Classroom

Indoor Arena

Admin  
Building

Mountain Range

Front Paddock

Caretaker's  
Cottage

Parking Lot

Pond

Heritage Park  
Development

# OUR HERD OF HEROES

## Why An EQUI-KIDS' Horse

(And not a bicycle or treadmill?)

- The 3-D movement of a horse's walk almost exactly replicates "normal human walking."
- Practice Makes Perfect. A horse walks ~60 beats/minute, so in a 30-minute session, the client/rider experiences 1,800 repetitions of "normal" walking.
- Riders learn movement in a meaningful, motivating session.
- Stretches tight muscles
- Strengthens weak muscles, especially the trunk/core muscles
- Improves postural alignment and body awareness
- Wonderful partners=our horses!
- Specially trained horses, Therapists, Riding Instructors. SAFETY FIRST!
- Outdoors, natural environment-FUN!



# HOW DOES A HORSE BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR HERD?

Our horses are acquired through loans and donations or purchased by EQUI-KIDS (several have been from the Virginia Beach Mounted Patrol).

- Out of hundreds of horses considered for the program, only 2-3% will qualify after a 90-day trial.
- Specially trained and desensitized to tolerate the particular circumstances experienced in a therapeutic riding session, including:
  - crowding (one horse leader and two sidewalkers max)
  - loud noises
  - excessive and unusual movements from riders
  - motorized lift
  - various props and toys used in lessons
- Their unique role allows them to be “pampered” with around-the-clock veterinary care, acupuncture and massage therapy, farrier services, equine dentist, specific hours (lessons & exercise) standards per PATH Intl.
- We have horses, ponies, a mule, and two cats.





# JOIN OUR TEAM!

- Sidewalker
- Horse Leader
- Team Leader
- Barn Volunteers
- Administrative Volunteers
- Site/Facilities Volunteers
- Scouts BSA Service Projects
- Special Events
- Staff
- Board of Directors



# THANK YOU!

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of our center, and our program would not be possible without the countless hours of dedication that our volunteers provide to our participants. We are *SO THANKFUL* that so many wonderful folks believe in our mission. The positive impact YOU will make in the lives of our participants will be amazing – we can't do it without you!



[volunteer@equikids.org](mailto:volunteer@equikids.org) | (757) 721-7350 | [www.equikids.org](http://www.equikids.org)